

## House Votes on 9/11 Health Bill

Thursday, 29 July 2010

Washington, D.C. - Today, the House of Representatives considered legislation to address the health crisis caused by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. H.R. 847, the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act, would provide health care for those exposed to toxins released by the collapse of the World Trade Center towers. The bill would also reopen the federal Victim Compensation Fund to provide economic relief to those harmed by the attacks. Though the bill did not achieve the high, two-thirds majority required for passage under suspension of the House rules, the 255 votes in favor of the bill -including 12 Republicans- show that it will likely have majority support when it is reconsidered under normal rules. The final vote was 255-159.

The Zadroga Act is sponsored by New York Reps. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), and Peter King (R-NY), with the support of the entire New York Congressional delegation. Reps. Maloney, Nadler, and King released the following joint statement on today's vote:

"Today's vote showed that we have the support we need to pass the Zadroga Act, and we look forward to passing the bill with a simple majority when Congress returns from its August recess. We thank our colleagues in the New York delegation for their dedication to those who were harmed by the terrorist attacks on our nation.

"We will not rest until we finally provide proper care for ailing 9/11 responders and survivors, and fill the last remaining gap in America's recovery from the attacks. Nine long years after the attacks, the living victims of 9/11 are still suffering. We must pass this bill. It is the least we can do as a grateful nation."

The Zadroga Act is historic, but not unprecedented, legislation. In the aftermath of the Pearl Harbor attacks, Congress passed the War Hazards Compensation Act of 1942, which provided health care and financial relief to civilians who helped recover the dead and salvage what remained of our Pacific fleet. The Zadroga Act, if passed, will once again demonstrate that Congress will not abandon those harmed by an attack on our shores.

Fact Sheet on H.R. 847, the 9/11 Health and Compensation Act:

What is the problem?

- Thousands of first responders and others exposed to the toxins of Ground Zero are now injured and need our help. These include firefighters, rescue workers, responders, police officers and EMTs, construction workers, cleanup workers, residents, area workers, and schoolchildren, among others. Their illnesses include a range of respiratory, gastrointestinal, and mental health conditions.

- Over 13,000 WTC responders are sick and receiving treatment. Nearly 53,000 responders are enrolled in medical monitoring. 71,000 individuals are enrolled in the WTC Health Registry, indicating that they were exposed to the toxins.

- At least 10,000 people came from around the country to help in the aftermath of the attacks. They hail from every single state in the union and nearly every Congressional district. Many are sick and others are very concerned about their future health. (Please click [here](#) for a list of Registry enrollments nationwide and in each congressional district.)

- Those who have economic losses because of their WTC-related illnesses need and deserve compensation, but have no alternative to the current litigation system. The WTC contractors and the City of New York are being sued by over 11,000 people who are injured because of Ground Zero toxins. They face great financial loss because they were asked to help at Ground Zero in the country's time of need.

How does H.R. 847 address the problem?

- Provides medical monitoring and treatment to WTC responders and survivors (area workers, residents, students) who were exposed to the toxins at Ground Zero.
- Builds on the existing monitoring and treatment program by delivering expert medical treatment for these unique exposures at Centers of Excellence.
- Reopens the 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund (VCF) to provide compensation for economic losses and harm as an alternative to the current litigation system.
- Provides liability protections for the WTC contractors and the City of New York.

More information about H.R. 847:

- The cost of the bill has been reduced from \$10.5 billion to \$7.4 billion to ensure that the bill is completely paid-for and PAY-GO neutral.
- The offset targets "treaty shopping" where a foreign company in a country without a U.S. treaty routes income through a third intermediary company with a treaty to take advantage of the intermediary company's tax reductions.
- A companion measure to the Zadroga Act, S. 1334, was introduced by Senators Gillibrand, Schumer, Menendez, and Lautenberg in June 2009.